

In the Claims

The following is a complete listing of the claims and replace all prior claims in the application:

- 1        1. (Currently Amended) A method for forming a slider, comprising:
  - 2              forming a slider body having a first side, a second side, a leading edge and a trailing
  - 3              edge;
  - 4              using at least a first etching to form an air bearing structure on the slider body extending
  - 5              ~~to the trailing edge~~ for providing a desired fly height, and
  - 6              using a last etching to form a non-actuatable, wearable pad on the air bearing structure
  - 7              extending to at the trailing edge, the wearable pad being formed around a transducer and
  - 8              extending above the air bearing surface and, the wearable pad having a surface area of less than
  - 9              5% of a total air bearing surface area and a predetermined height selected to be greater than or
  - 10              equal to the desired fly height minus a disk roughness, wherein the wearable pad erodes during
  - 11              use to produce a predetermined height so that wearing of the pad during use produces an
  - 12              interference of zero at the desired fly height and provides negligible lift to the slider.
- 1        2. The method of claim 1 wherein the using at least a first etching to form an air bearing structure further comprises using two etching to form three surface levels.
- 1        3. The method of claim 2 wherein the using a last etching to form a non-actuatable, wearable pad further comprises forming a fourth surface level.
- 1        4-5. (Canceled)

1           6.     The method of claim 1 further comprising forming at least one front air bearing  
2     pad.

1           7.     The method of claim 1 further comprising forming side rails extending along  
2     sides of the support structure.

1           8.     The method of claim 1 wherein the non-actuatable, wearable pad is formed of a  
2     material selected from the group comprising alumina, TiC/Al<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> and silicon.

1           9.     The method of claim 1 wherein the non-actuatable, wearable pad comprises a  
2     surface area of less than 3.5% of a total air bearing surface area.

1           10.    The method of claim 1 wherein the non-actuatable, wearable pad comprises a  
2     surface area of less than 2% of a total air bearing surface area.

1           11.    The method of claim 1 wherein the non-actuatable, wearable pad comprises a  
2     surface area of 1% of a total air bearing surface area.